

Southside/Rolling Hills May 18, 2010 Meeting Summary

Steering Committee Attendees:

Mike Byrd, Ray Eurquhart, Joe Parker, Dan Levine, Deloris Hargrow, Thelma Sutton and Sandy Demeree

Other Attendees:

Jim Wise, Mike Barros, Michael Pullum, Karl Schlachter, Mildred Rogers, Barney Rogers, Wilmur Conyers, Yvonne Gilyard, Juanita Massenburg, Tamesha Thompson-Eleanya, Michael Lee, Harold Chestnut, George Roberson, Jim Wise, Sandra Moore and Na'im Gray

- I. **Welcome and Introductions** – Joe Parker welcomed Steering Committee (SC) members and other attendees. Ray Eurquhart requested an introduction of Michel Lee with Applebox who has been invited to be a member of the sub-committee for Whitted school. Applebox works with Film companies to create projects like Main Street. Mr. Parker then requested introductions from SC members and meeting attendees. Ray Eurquhart introduced Donnie Rogers, a minister of COGIC on Fallow St as a new SC member.
- II. **Sub-Committee Reports**
 - a. Housing: Mr. Eurquhart provided an update in the absence of Lorisa Seibel. The purpose of the Housing Committee is to help develop a plan to meet the housing needs of all Southside and Rolling Hills area residents, current and former, for affordable, quality housing. The Committee will help identify housing needs of all area residents, including home repairs needed by current homeowners, supportive housing for residents with special needs (such as disabled, elderly, and veterans), and services needed to help other lower income residents to qualify for new homeownership and rental housing.

The Housing Subcommittee reached consensus on the following recommendations for consideration by the Steering Committee:

- Set aside land of at least 1.5 acres in the Southside revitalization area to build at least 20 units of housing to meet affordable housing and support service needs of Southside residents, based on a needs assessment, the redevelopment plan, and market, in consultation with a Southside housing committee, including Southside residents, Self-Help, and the City to advise on the design and cost of housing (with the intention of transferring

the land for one dollar to an experienced nonprofit housing developer with adequate funding in place to build the housing).

- Include a percentage of permanently affordable homeownership.
 - Include home repair grants for existing lower income homeowners in revitalization areas of the Southside Neighborhood. (City will assess repair needs and income.)
 - Create a Southside housing committee with Southside residents, Self-Help, and the City to determine how land-banked properties are redeveloped and work with housing developers.
 - Review proposed guidelines for designs of new housing. (City staff will develop.)
 - Clarify maximum numbers and flexibility of housing units on the Rolling Hills site. (Look at mix of homeownership and rental, and detached homeownership.)
 - Clarify what happens to affordability of tax credit-funded rental housing after 30 years.
 - Assess housing and service needs of all residents of the redevelopment area, especially people with special needs, including disabled, elderly, veterans, and other lower income residents of the Southside area. (City Community Development will bring back a plan for a needs assessment as soon as possible.)
- b. Human Capital(HC): Mike Byrd reported on a meeting he and Sandy Demeree had where they decided they would like to begin inviting people to join the committee. The next meeting will be held Thursday May 20 at 6:30pm 201 W Enterprise St. Mike went on to explain that eventually the larger HC sub committee would break into smaller sub committees. Mike Barros will email Mike Byrd regarding the capacity issue of the community center. Sandy Moore urged the SC committee and Mike Byrd to move on getting the HC subcommittee staffed up.
- c. Whitted school: Mr. Eurquhart provided an update explaining his concerns about site control of Whitted school and that there is a real need to double our efforts on the Whitted School committee – Larry Jarvis added site control is a non issue because Durham county wants to deed it to city but the challenge is the lack of funding to renovate. He added however that funds are available to conduct a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment and as asbestos inspection and abatement

plan. Dan Levine was asked to chair but said he is not sure he will be able to do so. Dan was asked by Sandy Demeree because of the importance of Whitted school Sandy Demeree then asked if Dan would agree to co chair and Dan said he was not sure. The next Whitted school committee meeting will be Thursday May 20th at 6pm at 201 W. Enterprise. Sandy recommends that we give more support to the Whitted school committee.

- d. Outreach: Ray has been working to grow the committee with residents of the community. Ray wants to address the absentee issues specifically those members that are not showing up. Ray suggested that the list be purged and a new letter be generated as a solution to begin to address the issue of people saying they will be in attendance, but ultimately not attending.

III. Human Capital Plan Update and Open Discussion Items- Sandy Moore started her report by bringing everyone to consensus on the philosophy that a HCP is only as good as the SC's ability to implement it. She then spoke to the challenge of how collectively we marshal the resources for the implementation of the HCP. Sandy also mentioned the challenge of funding in a competitive market and the relationship to other local Nonprofit organizations (NPO), she made the comment that this plan focuses on how to build onto strength of other local NPO's. She stated that strategically the SC has to prioritize the HCP based on finances. Also, that it is critically important to match up the implementation of the HCP to a Timeline that matches up to the physical plan. She went on to make known that based on a meeting from this afternoon with Duke, support was pledged for an implementation person to be on the ground both supporting the SC committee and providing on the ground early outreach and implementation toward this effort. She did not mention the name of the person, but reassured the SC that it is someone that they are familiar with.

Discussion Items:

Sandy mentioned that the SC had some concerns around three issues that she wanted to address more fully. Those issues were: Property tax assessments; Housing Assistance Program; and Dispute resolution.

- North Carolina is one of the states that have a Property Tax Circuit Breaker. It's an effective state method of targeting aid to those who really need it, with the benefits increasing as income levels of the property owners decline. It's a good policy that tries to prevent the property taxes from exceeding the ability to pay. Unfortunately, the program in NC only applies to the elderly and

disabled. The Steering Committee may consider lobbying the state to modify their program to be more like Maryland's, which has multiple thresholds for income and the percentage of that income that is spent on property taxes. There is also a homestead exemption that applies both to the elderly and those whose disposable income as a household is less than ~\$25k per year. That allows for a substantial amount of the assessed value of the home to not be included in the calculation of the tax.

- The Housing Improvement Programs (HIP) programs that exist in the City of Raleigh Durham are:

-For people 62 and older in Durham: Department of House and Community Development: (919)560-4570

-Weatherization assistance for low income homeowners and renters: Operation Breakthrough (919)688-8111

-For independent living/accessibility issues: Durham Independent Living (919)560-6815

-Triangle J Area Agency on Aging can identify faith-based or civic groups that assist low income and elderly/disabled: (919) 558-9398

-Loans/reverse mortgages: Durham Affordable House Coalition (919)683-1185 and Durham Regional Community Development Center (919)688-3381

Sandy talked about the North Carolina circuit breaker and the application and benefits of the program and suggested the SC lobby the state to be more like the state of Maryland's program for instance. She went on to discuss the all of the HIP programs that are already offered locally. Sandy identified a small gap and Mike Barros further illuminated on the gap existing with the elderly and handicap who don't qualify for loan money. Also there is a gap that exists for single mothers who fall into the 80 area median income category. Mike also mentioned a need for a rehab or rent to own program.

- An example of a dispute resolution process is the Cadet Committee in St. Louis, MO. The Cadet Committee was an ad hoc committee of the Forest Park Southeast Resident Council. In an effort to build 204 units of much needed elderly housing in the neighborhood, the local Alderman passed legislation that would allow the Cadet Committee to determine the relocation package

for each property owner, homeowner and renter residing on the site slated for redevelopment as a senior housing complex. The developer agreed to these terms. The Committee consisted of one faith based member and four residents serving on the Resident Council. Property assessments were conducted by a third party to evaluate the value of the properties. The Committee reviewed the information and determined that each property and home owners was entitled to 2 times the assessed value. Each renter was provided with moving expenses and one's month utility allowance. Owners that disputed the value were given the right to appeal to the Cadet Committee. The developer agreed to these terms.

IV. Issues of Consensus- Sandy Moore reiterated the point that the dispute resolution committee assists in moving the consensus process forward. Mike Byrd's concern is with investor opportunists taking advantage of those who remain because of the lack of eminent domain. Sandy Moore talked about the issue being one of education and outreach. Ray asked if there is a model on how to deal with this issue. Ray R. asked how to manage and staff the consensus committee and Sandy Moore said once Urban Strategies knows the specifics then we can provide direction on how to staff and manage. Joseph Parker asked what should be the makeup of the resolution committee the answer is some residents and stakeholders. Sandy Moore said that consensus is necessary in this process and is a place to resolve disputes. E. Shin will send out the decision items the SC needs to make for the purpose of shaping the Dispute resolution committee. What things do you want to take on, how do you publicize and how do you staff. Sandy Moore reiterated the importance of the resolution committee. Ray asked for models of consensus to be agreed upon by the SC to be able to move together. Sandy Moore raised that in the situation where there is not full consensus how do you present it?

V. Steering Committee input on Tax Credit Application: Joe Parker spoke of all the challenges that were discussed on the telephone, he spoke of the long grueling conference call and challenges of getting to a consensus around the group agreeing to support the tax credit app with some concerns on funding etc. Joe felt the committee needed more time and preferred to be face to face to really be productive. He also mentioned that the City Council approved the application 6-1. Sandy Moore talked about process and consensus, and also how to report. Sandy Moore recommended that in the future when those types of issues arise that an alternative would be reporting back that the

committee reached a general consensus but not enough time for complete consensus.

- VI. Tax Credit Application:** Karl Schlachter reported that the full tax credit application was delivered on time to NC Housing finance agency Friday morning. Karl mentioned that the application is a public document and will be posted on the city's website soon. Additionally the support letters for the application will be sent to Steering Committee members by mail. Currently the housing finance agency is reviewing applications. Karl spoke about the possibilities of a successful application in saying that the housing finance agency limits the numbers of applications a developer can have funded as well as a county and with that in mind we are currently competing against 11 other applications for which 5 or 6 are likely to get funded. The timeline for a decision is late July, early August 2010. Karl also reported on a funding services motion that city council passed to find other ways to fund non-profit housing providers beyond taking money from current local NPO's. Members of the SC will get the chance to have input on new funding ideas but the new model could entail a slight increase in local taxes. Joseph Parker announced that there will be said that there will be 2-3 SC members on the committee to establish the new model.
- VII. Redevelopment Plan Process and Schedule** Karl Schlachter requested this agenda item be put back on the Agenda. He also suggested the SC designate the June 15th meeting to present and review the preliminary redevelopment plan. Final approval could occur as soon as Oct 2010. The SC will help to mold the plan and all that goes into it (ie priorities, funding, etc). Dan Levine asked how the initial vision presented by Torti Gallas and redevelopment plan relate. Karl explained that it is the initial document and the redevelopment plan is the broader plan with a funding strategy attached. Karl said critical dates will be emailed out to the SC members. Karl also mentioned that the SC's approval is needed well in advance of Aug 2nd which is the date of the first scheduled public hearing before the Redevelopment Commission (City Council acts as the Redevelopment Commission). Larry suggested that the SC committee should meet once again after June 15th, if needed, to come to consensus on supporting the Redevelopment Plan before the August 2nd meeting. The Redevelopment Plan will be reviewed by the Redevelopment Committee (City Council) on August 2nd, then to Planning Commission in September and from there on to City Council in October for final approval. Larry suggested that the plan be given the report to review before the June 15th meeting to be able to discuss and make an informed decision. There was a consensus that the June 15 meeting will be entirely dedicated to the plan.

- VIII.** No new business was reported
- IX.** No critical upcoming dates and event were reported.
- X.** Next meeting was scheduled for June 15th and the consensus was a 4pm start time. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm by Joe Parker.

Respectfully submitted by Na'im Gray.